COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development Resource Agency

John Marin, Agency Director

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION SERVICES

Gina Langford, Coordinator

DATE: July 28, 2006

TO: Interested Parties

SUBJECT: **Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for English Colony Estates Subdivision (PEIR T20060029)**

REVIEW PERIOD: **July 28, 2006 to August 28, 2006**

Placer County will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project identified above in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15082. The purpose of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to provide responsible agencies and interested persons with sufficient information in order to make meaningful responses as to the scope and content of the EIR. Your timely comments will ensure an appropriate level of environmental review for the project.

Project Description: The project proposes a subdivision of 24 single-family homes on lots ranging from 2.30 – 3.35 acres with 13.5 acres of open space and an equestrian trail system.

Project Location: The 78-acre project is located at 1797 English Colony Way, north of Loomis, Placer County.

For more information regarding the project, please contact Jennifer Dzakowic, Associate Planner, (530)745-3008 or email: jdzakowi@placer.ca.gov

A copy of the 12-page NOP is available for review at the Penryn Library, Loomis Library, Placer County Community Development Resource Agency, and County website:
http://www.placer.ca.gov/CommunityDevelopment/EnvCoordSvcs/EnvDocs.aspx

Scoping Meeting: The Lead Agency will hold a public Scoping Meeting to receive oral comments on Wednesday, August 16, 2006, 1:00 pm in the Planning Commission Chambers located at 2900 Richardson Drive, Dewitt Center, Auburn.

NOP Comment Period: Written comments should be submitted at the earliest possible date, but not later than 5:00 pm on August 28, 2006 to Lori Lawrence, Environmental Coordination Services, Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 280, Auburn, CA 95603, (530)745-3075, fax (530)745-3003, or cdraecs@placer.ca.gov.

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Project Location

The project site is located at 1797 English Colony Way on two parcels (APN 032-051-003, and 004). The ±78-acre project site is north of the Town of Loomis, north and east of English Colony Way. Refer to *Figure 1 – Project Site and Vicinity Map,* which shows the location of the project site within the Rocklin quadrangle of the USGS 7.5 minute topographic map. *Figure 2 – Assessor's Map* shows the size and location of the project parcels, as well as those in the immediate vicinity of the project site.

The project site is within the Horseshoe Bar / Penryn Community Plan area, which encompasses an approximately 25 square mile area located south of the unincorporated area of Newcastle and the City of Auburn, north of the community of Granite Bay, west of Folsom Lake, and east of the Town of Loomis and the cities of Rocklin and Roseville. Under the Horseshoe Bar / Penryn Community Plan, the project site has a Rural Estates land use designation, which allows for development of single family residential dwellings on a minimum lot size of 4.6 acres. The zoning designation for the project site, pursuant to the Placer County Zoning Ordinance, is RA-10 (Residential Agricultural – 10 acre minimum lot size).

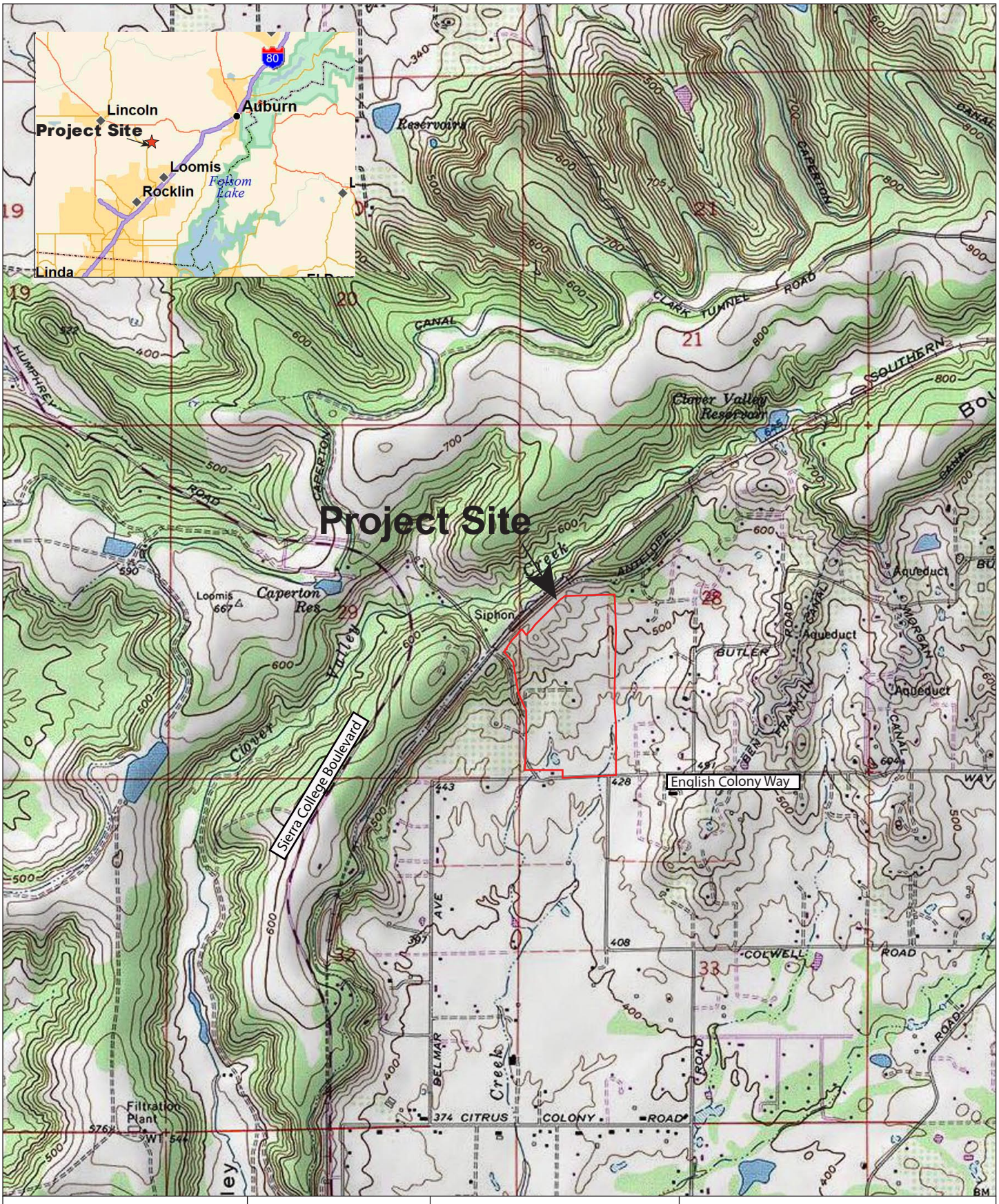
1.2 Project Setting

Site Characteristics

The English Colony Estates site is presently undeveloped and is characterized by varying topography, with areas of rock outcrop interspersed with oak woodland, sage scrub, grassland, and riparian/aquatic habitat. A number of access roads occur throughout the site. The project site was previously the site of commercial orchard operations and remnants of these agricultural operations, including irrigation pipes and abandoned orchards, remain onsite. The site generally slopes downhill from north to south, with elevations onsite ranging from ±580 feet in the northwest corner of the site to ±425 feet at the southeast corner of the site.

Antelope Creek bisects the southeastern corner of the site, and a tributary of the creek extends into the project site from the south, near the southwestern corner of the site. These drainages support vegetation characteristic of riparian areas. Approximately 0.86 acres of seasonal wetlands and other waters under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were delineated on the project site, and another 1.76 acres of seasonal wetlands/aquatic habitat supported by artificial hydrology were identified on the site (H.T. Harvey & Associates, 2006). This includes a ±0.34-acre pond in the southern portion of the property. Wetlands that are determined to be supported solely by artificial sources of water are not regulated by the Corps.

Native trees on the site include blue oak, interior live oak, valley oak, buckeye, and foothill pine, with willow occurring along drainages. Remnant orchard trees, mostly cherry, have not been tended and are in generally poor condition. The oak woodlands, grasslands, drainages, and wetland areas on the site provide wildlife habitat and may



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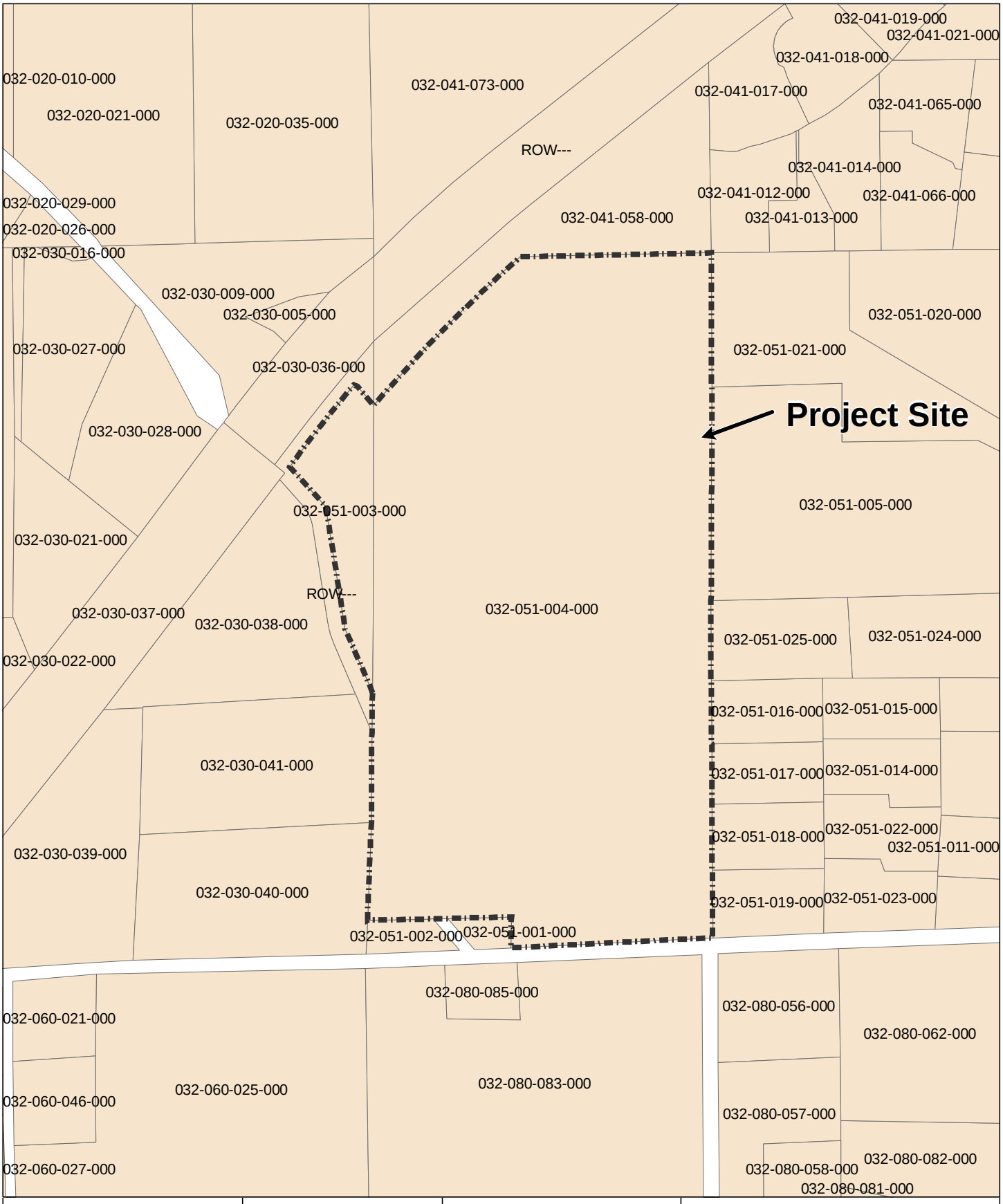
0 1000 2000

Approximate scale in feet

NOTES:
Base map: Rocklin, CA, USGS
7.5 minute topographic quadrangle

Figure 1

SITE & VICINITY MAP
English Colony Estates
Placer County, California



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Scale in Feet

Figure 2

ASSESSOR'S MAP

English Colony Estates

Placer County, California

support federal and state designated special status species. A number of elderberry shrubs, the unique habitat of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act), were identified on the project site.

Two soil types have been mapped on the project site. Both of these soils (Andregg coarse sandy loam, 2-9 percent slopes and Andregg coarse sandy loam, rocky, 15 to 30 percent slopes) are well drained, granitic soils that exhibit a shallow depth to bedrock. Granite rock outcrops occur throughout the site, with the largest of the outcrops occurring in the northern portion of the site.

Surrounding Land Uses

Properties south and west of the project site carry the Rural Estates designation, while properties abutting the project site on the east carry either a Rural Estates or a Rural Residential land use designation. The Rural Residential designation allows for minimum lot sizes of 2.3 acres. The zoning designation for parcels on the west side of the project site is RA-10 along the northern half of the project site's western boundary and RA-100 (Residential Agricultural – 2.3 acre minimum lot size) along the southern half of the western boundary. A small area north of the project site is within a Farm Zone District and allows for a minimum 10 acre lot size.

Land uses south, east, and west of the project site are primarily large lot residential, with some existing agricultural operations (mostly consisting of fruit orchards and livestock grazing) south and east of the project site. North of the project site are the Union Pacific railroad tracks and undeveloped land associated with the ±1,954-acre Bickford Ranch Specific Plan area. Compatibility with existing and allowable land uses surrounding the project site will be evaluated in the EIR.

1.3 Project Elements

The project proposes to subdivide the ±78-acre project site into 24 residential lots with a minimum lot size of ±2.30 acres and a maximum lot size of ±3.35 acres (*Figure 3)*. The proposed project would provide for the construction of 24 single-family homes, internal roadways, and placement of dry and wet utilities, including the construction of individual onsite wastewater disposal systems to serve each lot. The project proposes five lots that would provide a combined ±13.50 acres of open space. The project also proposes an equestrian trail system within the development to connect it to the public trail system in the Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve across English Colony Way south of the project site. It is the intent of the applicant that keeping of livestock (i.e., horses) be allowed on each lot and that the development accommodates equestrian activities.

The project, as proposed, would require amendment of the Horseshoe Bar / Penryn Community Plan to change the land use designation of the property from Rural Estates (RE) to Rural Residential (RR). To provide for consistency with the proposed land use designation, the project would also require rezoning the property from the existing RA-10 (Residential Agricultural – 10 acre minimum lot size) to RA-100 (Residential Agricultural – 100,000 square foot [2.3 acre] minimum lot size).

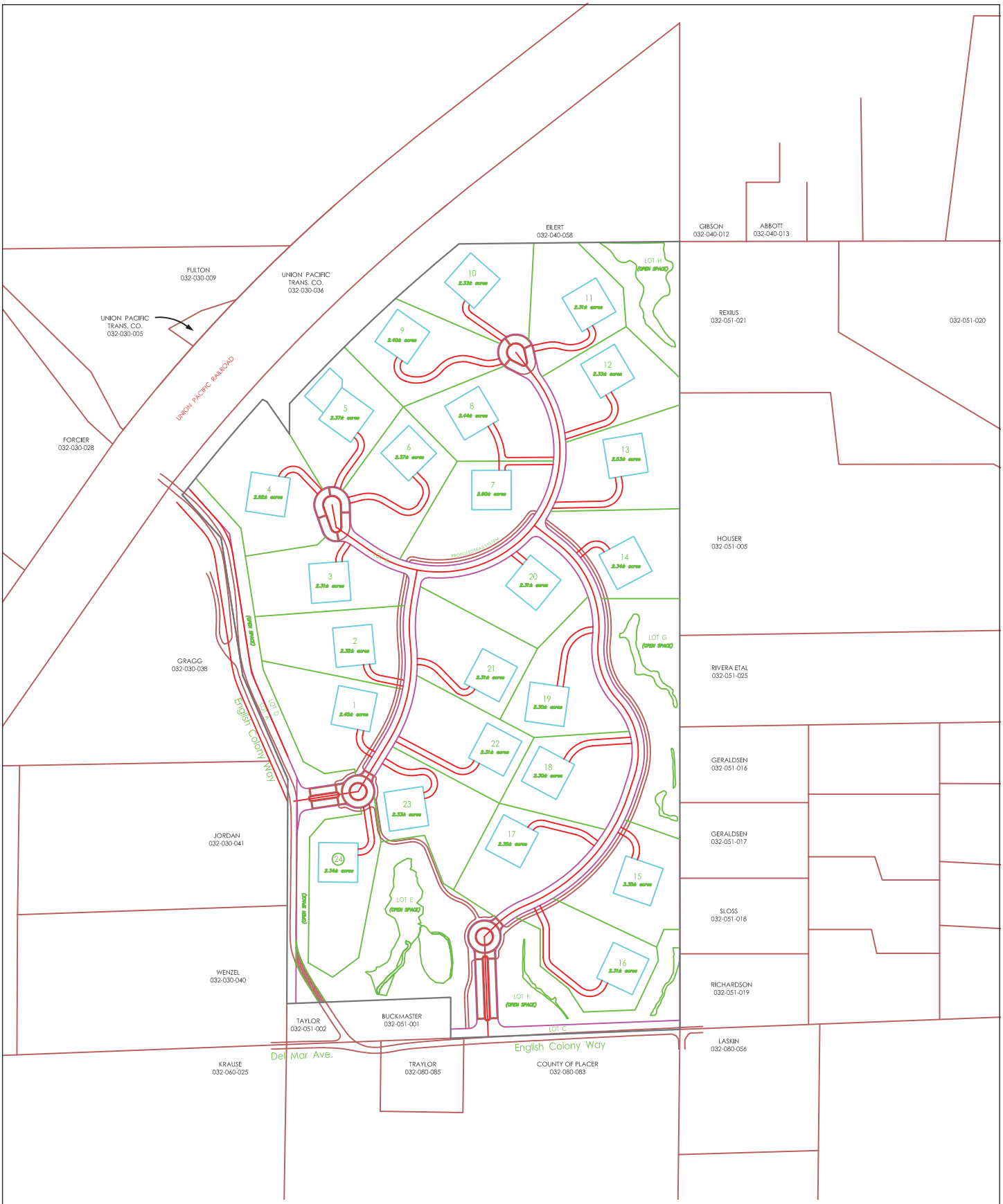
Circulation. Access to the proposed development would be provided at two points off of English Colony Way; one east of its intersection with Del Mar Avenue and one north of the Del Mar / English Colony Way intersection. Circulation throughout the development is proposed to be provided by a loop road connecting these entrances, with two cul-de-sacs extending within the development to provide access to lots on the northern portion of the project site (*Figure 3)*. Internal roadways are proposed to include a 40-foot paved right-of-way with roadside drainage ditches on either side. Landscaped traffic circles are proposed to be constructed at the south and west entrances to the project site and are also proposed at the bulb end of each cul-de-sac. The paved travel surface around the traffic circles is proposed to be 25 feet wide, or of sufficient width to allow emergency vehicle circulation. Entrances to the subdivision would not be gated. Where indicated on the site plan, a 10-foot wide equestrian trail is proposed to run adjacent to the roadway and provide access south of the project site to allow equestrian access to the public trail system in Traylor Ranch. Portions of the equestrian trail constructed through designated open space areas are proposed to be 20 feet wide.

The project would widen English Colony way along all project frontages to provide an overall 60-foot right-of-way. The right-of-way would include a 32-foot wide paved surface consisting of two 12-foot wide travel lanes, and on each side, a 4-foot wide paved shoulder/Class III bike lane, a 2-foot wide aggregate-base shoulder, and a roadside drainage ditch. All roadway improvements proposed would be constructed according to Placer County standards. The EIR will analyze impacts of the proposed project at the intersection of English Colony Way and Del Mar Avenue and will evaluate the realignment of the English Colony Way / Del Mar Avenue intersection to construct a standard "T" type intersection to improve safety at the intersection. The County has previously identified the need for realignment of this intersection.

Utilities. The proposed project would require placement of utilities to serve the new development including water, electricity, telephone, natural gas, and cable. Underground utilities would run in easements along roadways within the development. Domestic water would be supplied from the existing 42-inch water main that is located along English Colony Way. Wastewater disposal would be achieved through the use of individual onsite septic tanks and leach fields. Each residential lot would be provided with a septic tank and would have a ±15,000 square foot leach field to provide for waste disposal.

Grading and Drainage. Although precise grading quantities are not known at present, it is anticipated that due to the variable topography and rock outcrops that occur on the project site, substantial grading for house pads, driveways, and roadways would be required for the project. The greatest amount of lot grading would be required in the northwest corner of the project site where the steepest topography occurs.

Drainage on the project site would generally follow the natural slope of the site and flow from north to south toward the natural drainages associated with Antelope Creek. Roadside ditches and culverts would direct stormwater runoff toward water quality facilities prior to being discharged to open space lots on the southern end of the project



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Source: MacKay & Somps

Figure 3

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

English Colony Estates

Placer County, California

site. A post-construction Storm Water Management Plan would be implemented by the applicant to control and reduce project impacts to water quality.

2.0 PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

The EIR prepared for the English Colony Estates Subdivision project will provide analysis of the impacts pertaining to the resource areas identified below. Although detailed analysis has not been conducted at this time, preliminary analysis of the proposed project has identified impacts likely to result from the project. The following paragraphs discuss the results of preliminary impact identification and anticipated analyses that will be included in the EIR prepared.

Land Use. The project proposes changes to the site's land use and zoning designations to allow for higher density residential development than permitted under the current Community Plan land use designations. Adjacent parcels on the east are zoned for 2.3 acre minimum lots (as the project proposes), properties to the north, south, and west are zoned for minimum 10 acre lots. The proposed project would result in higher density than anticipated under the Community Plan and allowed under the existing zoning. The EIR will include analysis of the potential impacts associated with higher density development of the project site, including any incompatibilities of the proposed project with existing agricultural uses in the project area. Mitigation measures will be included in the EIR for any impacts identified.

Biological Resources. The EIR will discuss potential project impacts to wetlands on the project site, as well as project impacts to plants and wildlife. The project site has 2.62 acres of wetland, of which 0.86 acres are within the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers. As proposed, the project would permanently impact approximately 0.474 acres of wetlands located in the central, northeast, and southeast areas of the project site, some of which is supported by artificial hydrology, and thus, would not be regulated by the Corps. Habitat for federally threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle occurs on the project site (elderberry shrubs) and would be impacted by the proposed project. The site has potential to provide habitat for other special status species of wildlife and plants that could potentially be impacted by implementation of the proposed project. Mitigation measures included in the EIR for impacts of the project to wetlands and special-status species will follow the protocol of the agency(ies) with jurisdiction over the affected resource.

A total of 840 trees were inventoried on the project site. Of these, 804 are native oaks. Although it is unknown at this time precisely how many native trees will be removed, it is anticipated that the proposed project would require the removal of a substantial percentage of the native trees inventoried on the project site. The EIR will quantify the total number of native trees that will be removed by the project and will identify mitigation measures required for project compliance with the Placer County Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Cultural Resources. The EIR will include an analysis of potential project impacts to historic/prehistoric cultural resources and identify any mitigation measures based on the Cultural Resources Assessment of the project site.

Visual Resources/Aesthetics. The proposed project would change the existing visual character of the project site by the addition of homes at a density that is greater than anticipated by the community plan and zoning designations. The EIR will include a qualitative analysis of how the project may change views of the project site. The potential aesthetic impacts of the proposed development and any impacts resulting from inconsistency of the visual characteristics of the proposed development (density, etc.) with surrounding development will be discussed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be identified. The project would also introduce new sources of lighting within a currently undeveloped area. Potential impacts of new lighting will be analyzed, and mitigation measures will be included for any potential impacts identified.

Air Quality. The project would introduce new sources of pollutant emissions to the project area, both during project construction and following project buildout, as a result of increased vehicle trips and onsite equipment emissions. Results of URBEMIS emissions modeling will identify potential construction and operational emissions of the project, and these will be compared to Placer County Air Pollution Control District's (PCAPCD) significance thresholds to determine project short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts to air quality. Mitigation measures for impacts identified will be based on PCAPCD's *Best Available Mitigation Measures* (2006). These may include prohibitions on open burning on residential lots and on the installation of woodburning heating devices (through CC&Rs) and may include requirements for installing HVAC units equipped with the PremAir catalyst system in addition to standard construction phase mitigation measures.

Noise. The proposed project would result in short-term noise impacts in the project area as a result of heavy equipment operation during site preparation, grading, and construction. The EIR will discuss potential long-term noise impacts to residents of the proposed subdivision, especially as they pertain to noise generated from the adjacent railroad tracks. This will include discussion of noise attenuation over distance and the proposed separation distance between the railroad tracks and residential land uses of the project. The analysis of noise impacts will rely on the noise analysis that has been prepared for the project site. Standard mitigation measures, including compliance with the County's noise ordinance during construction, are expected to be sufficient to reduce potential noise impacts from the project to a less than significant level.

Geology/Soils. The proposed project would require substantial grading and site preparation of building pads, driveways, roadways, and drainage culverts and swales. The project would also require trenching and backfill for utilities placement. These activities would alter site topography and could result in accelerated soil erosion. A discussion of potential impacts will be included in the EIR, and mitigation measures, including standard best management practices to minimize alteration of site topography and for erosion control during grading, will be identified.

Water Quality/Hydrology. The project site is located within the Dry Creek Watershed near Antelope Creek. The project proposes to create lots that would allow both onsite sewage disposal and livestock enclosures. The EIR will evaluate the potential for grading and other site disturbance associated with the project to result in accelerated

sedimentation of area waterways and the potential for the proposed residential development to result in increased urban pollution of stormwater runoff from the project site. The EIR will include a discussion of potential impacts to surface and groundwater quality associated with keeping livestock on small parcels and will address potential impacts to groundwater of onsite wastewater disposal proposed by the project. Mitigation measures for impacts related to livestock enclosures and onsite wastewater disposal will be identified. Potential impacts associated with runoff of urban pollutants and sediment from the project site during and following construction will be evaluated, and mitigation measures will be identified to reduce impacts. According to the Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan (James M. Montgomery Engineers, April 1992), onsite stormwater detention for the mitigation of peak flow rate increase is recommended for this project site. Additional mitigation measures are expected to include best management practices to be implemented prior to, during, and following construction.

Transportation/Circulation. The proposed project would introduce additional traffic to project area roadways and intersections. The proposed project would also construct new roadways within the development, as well as two new intersections for project access from English Colony Way. The EIR will include analysis of project impacts to the following intersections:

Sierra College Boulevard / English Colony Way
Sierra College Boulevard / Del Mar Avenue
Del Mar Avenue / English Colony Way
Sierra College Boulevard / King Road

The EIR will also evaluate project effects on eight roadway segments in the project area:

English Colony Way from Sierra College Boulevard to Del Mar Avenue
English Colony Way from Del Mar Avenue to Humphrey Road
English Colony Way from Humphrey Road to Swetzer Road
English Colony Way from Swetzer Road to Taylor Road
Del Mar Avenue from Sierra College Boulevard to Citrus Colony Road
Del Mar Avenue from Citrus Colony Road to English Colony Way
Sierra College Boulevard from Taylor Road to King Road
Sierra College Boulevard from King Road to Del Mar Road

Impacts from traffic generated by the 24 proposed residential lots could include decreased levels of service at intersections and increased road congestion. Mitigation measures identified by the traffic study being prepared for the project will be included in the EIR.

The transportation/circulation section will also evaluate potential project impacts in relation to the current configuration of the intersection of English Colony Way and Del Mar Avenue and the narrow undercrossing of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks on English Colony Way. Potential mitigation measures may include intersection

improvements and/or project contribution to the County traffic fee mitigation program to fund improvements to English Colony Way.

Public Services and Utilities. The proposed project would require the extension/ expansion of public services and utilities to the project. The following public service and utility providers would be required to provide services to the project:

Public Services:

Schools - Penryn Unified School District

Parks and Recreation - Placer County Department of Facility Services

Police – Placer County Sheriff's Department

Fire – Placer County Fire District

Drainage – Placer County Department of Public Works

Solid Waste Disposal – Auburn Placer Disposal Service

Utilities:

Water – Placer County Water Agency

Gas – Pacific Gas and Electric

Electricity – Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Telephone – Surewest Communications

Cable – Comcast

Impacts of the project related to the provision of public services and utilities will be discussed in the EIR, and mitigation measures to reduce any impacts identified will be included. The project proposes individual onsite wastewater disposal by the use of septic systems installed on each lot. The feasibility of operating these systems will be evaluated in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be identified as necessary.

Hazards. The project site has historically been used for agricultural operations including fruit orchards. The EIR will discuss potential impacts related to residual contamination of the project site from past agricultural operations and will summarize the results of Phase 1 and 2 testing conducted on the project site. Mitigation measures will be identified as necessary.

3.0 PROJECT APPROVALS

Several permits would be required prior to construction of the proposed project. The responsible agencies and types of permits are listed in Table 1. All other regulatory guidance will be discussed in the applicable resources chapter of the EIR.

Approvals Issued by Placer County

Tentative Subdivision Map Approval - The County must review and approve the proposed tentative subdivision map.

Community Plan Amendment - The proposed project would require County approval of an amendment to the existing 1994 Horseshoe Bar / Penryn Community Plan to change

the land use designation of the ±78-acre project site from Residential Estates to Residential Rural to allow for reduced lot sizes.

Rezone – The proposed project would require a change in zoning designation of the project site from RA-10 (Residential Agricultural, 10 acre minimum lot size) to RA-100 (Residential Agricultural, 2.3 acre minimum lot size).

Approvals Issued by Other Agencies

Section 404 Permit - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regulates the placement of fill or dredged material that affects waters of the United States, which include streams and wetlands. The Corps regulates these activities under authority granted through Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Impacts to wetlands on the project site will require the project to obtain a Section 404 permit to impact jurisdictional waters found on the project site.

Section 401 Water Quality Certification – In association with the Section 404 permit issued by the Corps, the project must apply for and obtain a state Water Quality Certification from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board in compliance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement – A Streambed Alteration Agreement must be entered into with the California Department of Fish and Game for any project activities that would "substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake or use any materials from a streambed." The project would require a Section 1602 agreement for any project impacts to the streambed and banks of Antelope Creek.

Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Compliance – Any project that disturbs more than one acre of land is required to obtain a permit for stormwater discharge under the NPDES program administered by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The proposed project would therefore be required to obtain coverage under the program for construction phase and post-construction phase stormwater discharge and would be required to develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Table 1. Required Approvals/Permits for English Colony Estates Project

Required Permit	Responsible Agency
Tentative Subdivision Map Approval	Placer County
Community Plan Amendment	Placer County
Rezone	Placer County
Section 404 Individual Permit	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Section 401 Certification	Regional Water Quality Control Board-Central Valley Region
Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement	California Department of Fish and Game
Section 402, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Compliance	Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region

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